



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231  
www.uspto.gov

He

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/882,320	06/15/2001	Andrew Carver	5490-000216	8429

27572 7590 09/17/2002

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.  
P.O. BOX 828  
BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MI 48303

EXAMINER

PHILOGENE, PEDRO

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3732

DATE MAILED: 09/17/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/882,320

Applicant(s)

CARVER ET AL.

Examiner

Pedro Philogene

Art Unit

3732

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 June 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 3732

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 2,3,16,17,27,28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

There is an inconsistency between the language in the preamble and these claims (2,3,16,17,27,28), thereby making the scope of the claims unclear. The preamble indicates sub-combination, while in these claims there is a positive recital of structure indicating that the combination of a device and a phalange is being claimed. The applicant is required to clarify what the claims are intended to be drawn to I.e, either the device alone or the device in combination with the phalange, and the language of the claims be consistent with the intent. Therefore, the language of these claims would not be given any weight.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-4, 6,8,10,12-18, 21, 24-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Meuli et al. (5,092,896).

Art Unit: 3732

With respect to claim 1, Mueli et al disclose a device for insertion into a first phalange and a second phalange so as to join the first phalange to the second phalange, comprising a substantially elongate member (3,4, 6) comprised of a resorbable material; as set forth in column 2, lines 43-47; wherein the member (3,4,6) has a first end portion (3), a middle portion (6), and second end portion (4) spaced and opposed from the first end portion, wherein the middle portion has a curvature; as set forth in column 2, lines 28-30, such that an angle is formed between the first end portion and the second end portion; as set forth in column 2, lines 28-30.

With respect to claims 2,3,4,6,8,10,12-14, Mueli et al teach all the limitations, as set forth in column 1 &2, lines 1-68; and as best seen in FIGS.1,2.

With respect to claim 15, Mueli et al disclose a device for insertion into a first phalange and a second phalange so as to join the first phalange to the second phalange, comprising a substantially elongate member (3,4, 6) comprised of a resorbable material; as set forth in column 2, lines 43-47; wherein the member (3,4,6) has a first end portion (3), a middle portion (6), and second end portion (4) spaced and opposed from the first end portion, wherein the first end portion and the second end portion has a surface portion for facilitating retention within the first phalange and the second phalange, as best seen in FIG.1,2; wherein the middle portion has a curvature; as set forth in column 2, lines 28-30, such that an angle is formed between the first end portion and the second end portion; wherein the angle is substantially anatomically correct; as set forth in column 2, lines 28-30.

Art Unit: 3732

With respect to claims 16-18,21,24,25; Mueli et al teach all the limitations, as set forth in column 1 &2, lines 1-68; and as best seen in FIGS.1,2.

With respect to claims 26-28, the method steps, as set forth, would have been inherently carried out in the operation of the device, as set forth above.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 5,7,19,20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meuli et al. (5,092,896) in view of Bramlet (5,984,970).

With respect to claims 5,7,19,20, although Mueli et al teaches of cut and grooves on the surface portion of the device, it is noted that Meuli et al did not teach of a threaded surface, as claimed by applicant. However, in a similar art, Bramlet evidences the use of a joint device with threaded surface to threadably secure the device to the bone substance of the respective bone.

Therefore, given the teaching of Bramlet, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention to incorporate thread on the surface of the first end portion to threadably secure the device to the bone substance of the respective bone.

Claims 9,11,22,23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meuli et al. (5,092,896) in view of Saffar (5,047,059).

Art Unit: 3732

With respect to claims 9,11,22,23, although Mueli et al teaches of cut and grooves on the surface portion of the device, it is noted that Meuli et al did not teach of a surface portion selected from the group consisting of shoulders, ribs, helixes or a combination thereof, as claimed by applicant. However, in a similar art, Saffar evidences the use of a joint device consisting of such a surfaces to facilitate implantation in the canal of the bones.

Therefore, given the teaching of Saffar, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the design of the device of Saffar in the device of Meuli et al to facilitate implantation in the canal of the bones.

### ***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

3,681,786	8-1972	Lynch
6,386,877	5-2002	Sutter
6,319,284	11-2001	Rushdy et al.
5,011,497	4-1991	Persson et al.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Pedro Philogene whose telephone number is (703) 308-2252. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

Art Unit: 3732

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kevin P Shaver can be reached on (703) 308-2582. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9302 for regular communications and (703) 305-3591 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.

Pedro Philogene  
September 10, 2002

  
PEDRO PHILOGENE  
PRIMARY EXAMINER